

VANCE'S LETTER-BOOK.

(Special Cor. of The Messenger.)
Messenger Bureau, Park Hotel.
Raleigh, August 7.

With a letter Davis sent Vance the following list of papers: Recommendations of Colonels MacRae and Iverson with indorsements of Generals Lee and Jackson. Recommendations of Lieutenant Colonel Johnson, with indorsements of Lee and Ewell. Recommendations of Colonel Scales, with indorsements of Generals Lee and A. P. Hill. Certificate of the secretary of war that no recommendations of Colonels Garrett or McElroy could be found in the war department.

March 21st General Whiting directed the enrollment of all free negroes in North Carolina and Virginia between the ages of 18 and 45, (for labor on fortifications, etc.)

April 15th in a letter to Thomas Bragg, confederate state commissioner, the governor said he had heard there were many citizens under arrest at Kinston; that he desired to know the causes of arrest and to have a speedy trial of them.

April 16th the secretary of war was begged, "for the present, at least, to suspend the enrollment and conscription of the state reserves in North Carolina, from 17 to 18 and from 45 to 50 years. Their enrollment now, with the present prospect of being called to the field from the crops, causes the utmost consternation and gloom, and would be followed by the most distressing consequences. Besides the state would be left powerless and without a militia organization. It cannot be the purpose of the confederate government to reduce a sovereign state to this dangerous and humiliating condition. It would be repugnant to the professions of the government."

April 18th a telegram to Secretary of the Treasury G. C. Memminger, at Raleigh, said: "In pursuance of a contract made last December with the holders of North Carolina cotton warrants in Europe, the steamer Edith has arrived at Wilmington to carry out the cotton due on the warrants. Can she do so?"

April 16th George V. Strong wrote of the Eli Swanner case that "although it is evident that Swanner is a very dangerous and disloyal man, yet I do not see that he can be convicted of any overt act of treason, and I will not therefore prosecute." Vance found that Swanner was in prison at Salisbury and requested his release. The commandant replied that Swanner had been discharged.

April 18th the secretary of war was written: "If it is possible send at least one regiment of regular troops to Colonel Palmer in western N. C. I beg you to read the indorsed letter from Brigadier General McElroy of the North Carolina militia. The condition of that country is truly deplorable and if the militia could be depended on starvation must ensue by the wholesale if they are kept from their crops, in a country where there are no slaves. Time will not suffice to tell you of all the horrors to which they are exposed. I beg you to relieve them quickly by sending some troops there."

The government stuck to its demand for one-half the storage room of the steamer Advance.

April 27th General Whiting ordered the removal of the state salt works from Masonboro sound. Vance asked the reason and what right Whiting had to interfere and control these important state works. He also wrote W. G. Worth to repair the works and get to work again.

April 21st, in a letter from Richmond, dated "Headquarters armies confederate states, General Braxton Bragg wrote to Vance: 'I have pleasure in congratulating you upon the recent brilliant affair at Plymouth under the leadership of that gallant young North Carolinian, Brigadier General Hoke. The president directs that the negroes captured by our forces be turned over to you for the present. If any of them belong to citizens of North Carolina have them restored to their owners. If any are owned in other states give me their number and the name and residences of their owners, and retain them until the president's views in reference to them may be conveyed to you. To avoid as far as possible all complications with the military authorities of the United States in regard to their position which will be made of this class of prisoners, the president respectfully requests your excellency to take the necessary steps to have the matter of such disposition kept out of the newspapers of the state and in every conceivable way to shun its obtaining any publicity as far as consistent with the proposed restoration.'

April 23rd the president said there was grave doubt of the expediency of suspending the execution of the conscript law in the northern counties of the state, as it would be an apparent yielding to the disaffected classes which Vance had said existed in that district. The president hoped the organization of the "reserve forces," when brought into unity with the active army, would give defence without interfering with agricultural pursuits.

April 16th a pardon was granted Alice Tice, Esther Tice, Martha Thompson and Martha Brown, who had been convicted of riot, in forcibly taking corn from a depot in Bladen county and sentenced to five months imprisonment.

Collier & Co. gave notice that the steamer Constance was sent to Wilmington specially to run out North Carolina and other cotton warrants.

Alex. Collier sent over from London on the Edith "a new kind of gun which is reported to be particularly destructive and I have to ask the authorities at Wilmington to accept it as a substitute for some of our people who but for our business would be doing duty in another capacity."

As late as May 3rd Vance wrote begging the confederate government to return 2,000 bales of cotton it had borrowed.

May 2nd is the date of a letter from the secretary of war saying that General Whiting had referred to the war department the correspondence between himself and Vance relative to

the exemption of D. L. Russell, Jr., under Vance's claim for his discharge, because he was an officer of North Carolina. The secretary of war declined to exempt, saying Russell was reduced to the ranks by the sentence of a court-martial and became liable to service in the brigade to which he belonged; that subsequent to this he procured his election as commissioner of Brunswick county and then Vance made his claim. Vance replying May 19th in a letter of great length said that Russell "was by an order directed to report to General Herbert or General Whiting for assignment or selection of a company as he might choose. He had not therefore been enrolled as a conscript at the time of his election as a commissioner, but had simply been ordered to report for enrollment and had actually not received the order." Then Vance added: "I earnestly urge upon you not to wound the spirit of this gallant and promising young officer by sending him into the ranks. At the age of 18 he left the state university, raised a company, served in such an acceptable manner as to win the admiration and approval of his superior officers. Major General Whiting, in approving the sentence of the court martial, bore testimony to his very good character as an officer. Colonel Lamb, under whom he served, gave most flattering testimony as to his capacity and efficiency. His aged father feels most keenly and sensitively upon the subject and on his account, in behalf of the promising young officer himself, and as a matter of justice and right I insist that my claim for exemption for him be allowed." The secretary of war refused to reply to this letter and so July 5th the governor wrote that he had not been received but that he was told General Whiting had orders to conscript Russell immediately. Vance added, "I simply wish to inform you that I cannot and will not submit to this being done without resisting it by every means at my command." And Vance carried his point; Russell was not conscripted.

May 11th General Lee wrote to the secretary of war as follows: "Yesterday evening the enemy penetrated a part of our lines and planted his colors upon the temporary breastworks erected by our troops. He was immediately repulsed and among the brave men who met him the Twentieth North Carolina regiment under Colonel Toon, of the brigade commanded by General R. I. Johnson, captured his flag. It was brought to me by Major John S. Brooks, of that regiment, who received his promotion for gallantry in the battle of Chancellorsville, with the request that it might be given to Governor Vance. I take great pleasure in complying with the wish of the gallant major and ask that it be granted and that these colors be presented to the state of North Carolina as another evidence of the valor and devotion that have made her name eminent in the annals of the confederacy." The secretary of war forwarding the above letter said: "The flag is transmitted to you, governor, to be placed among the honorable trophies won by the valor and devotion of the troops of North Carolina." The flag was brought to Raleigh by Hon. Josiah Turner, member of congress, and placed in the senate chamber.

June 7th Vance demanded that Colonel Ashby, of the Second Tennessee cavalry, be delivered to him for trial in the state court for stealing three mules and also for outrages in Wilkes. He declared that he was sure he would receive no military punishment.

June 6th General Whiting finally directed the suspension of the state salt works; that the employees were disloyal and were endangering Wilmington. Whiting seized all D. G. Worth's boats.

At Bermuda the governor of that colony seized seven bales of state cotton, violation of the revenue law. Vance tried to get it released but failed.

In June the Advance was sent to England for repairs. July 4th Vance let Davis & Fitzhugh have a half interest in the steamer. This firm operated for the confederate government under what was known as the Davis & Fitzhugh contract.

Vance claimed authority to appoint, promote and commission the officers of the regiments known as the "North Carolina State Troops." He had some titles to this matter. June 29th the secretary of war wrote "It is decided that the North Carolina state troops must be placed on the same footing with other regiments in the provisional army in regard to their organizations and that this department shall have absolute control of all appointments and promotions."

J. H. Flanner wrote that as fast as cotton receipts cancelled the bonds of the state in England the bonds were sent back to the state, for fear of capture, but were kept by the firm.

July 16th a letter to the secretary of war said the western border of the state required "protection from the inroads of the Tennessee Tories and Yankees." He said he has lent the confederate army all the arms he had, and wanted 2,000 or 3,000 stand of arms, at once.

A company which was building gunboats on the Roanoke wanted to buy iron rails from the Atlantic and North Carolina to use for armor. Vance asked that the sale be made, the company to pay for the iron and the money to be applied towards paying the road's debt to the state.

July 20th Vance wrote that he was required by law to appoint, promote and commission officers of the "state troops" and would certainly do so.

July 20th Samuel F. Phillips resigned as auditor and R. H. Battle, Jr., who was private secretary, was appointed auditor.

July 25th Vance applied for a passport for Commissioner John White, his wife and five children to return to England.

Lieutenant Colonel C. L. Harris of the Twenty-eighth and Sixty-ninth battalions was ordered to destroy the whiskey distilleries in Rutherford. He sent the order, which was for Colonel Palmer, to Vance, asking if this was not a matter for civil and not military action. Vance replied that it was a civil matter.

During part of July there was no communication between Raleigh and

Richmond either by mail or wire. Vance's letters of the 5th were not received at Richmond until the 23rd. In a letter of that date the secretary of war said: "This department has conceded many things to the government of North Carolina with the view to secure a cordial co-operation of the government and people in the defence of the country in this great struggle in which it is now engaged."

July 20th Captain John S. Dancy, of the Seventeenth North Carolina, sent from Petersburg by Colonel Edward Cantwell, to the governor, a flag captured from the 16th New York regiment, at Cold Harbor June 3rd, who charged boldly up to within seventy-five yards of the line of the Seventeenth and were literally cut to pieces. Only three of their men reached their lines. We captured a few. These were all left of the regiment. Their dead and company officers and men were killed immediately in our front and bodies were literally piled upon one another.

August 3rd Vance asked the war department for a military court for western North Carolina to try deserters taken from the army in their hands. He added: "Many have escaped from jails, and a number while being transferred from Asheville to Camp Vance overpowered the guard of junior reserves, killed two of the boys and made their escape."

August 5th Vance wrote Alex. Collier that while on the appeal of other governors and himself congress had repealed the odious regulations which did not allow the states to load full cargoes on blockade runners, President Davis had vetoed the repealing act. Vance said: "At present the business does not pay and if no relief is obtained I have instructed John White to ask your consent to dissolve our contract and sell out."

Vance August 5th wrote Collier that the state had shipped over 4,100 bales of cotton, which should, if it was safely received, leave quite a balance in the state's favor. He said the extortion of agents and consignees at Nassau and Bermuda was outrageous—2½ per cent. each way; "little better than robbery. It strikes me." Why can't we establish an agency of our own at Hamilton, Bermuda?

Vance had just been re-elected (August 4th) and wrote Collier: "It had been known to you that I was much dissatisfied, in this state particularly, towards the government, but the election just over contradicts it. My competitor, a bold and popular demagogue, made the issue distinctly of peace on terms less than independence, and I have beaten him worse than any man was ever beaten in North Carolina. Our people will stand fair and square by their new government and abide the common fate. Peace feelers have already been put out by both sides and people begin to breathe again."

Vance sent White to England the second time to buy up the state's cotton and rosin warrants outstanding in Europe. White was instructed to consult Flanner as to the best method of operating and in case cotton did not arrive fast enough he might borrow money on the state's credit or use the state's credit in any other way to attain his object; that no limitation was placed on the price to be paid for the warrants, that being left to White's judgment, provided it was less than the cost of the fulfillment of the warrant.

July 25th General Whiting said he had positive information that two-thirds of the conscripts employed at the salt works belonged to the treasonable organization known as the "H. O. A." He said this order was very strong in Randolph county. Whiting ordered the state to furnish two companies to guard the salt works.

August 25th Governor Vance lent Governor Smith, of Virginia, a large quantity of cloth, to be replaced in twelve months.

The foreign holders of North Carolina cotton and rosin sent an agent, Joseph V. Smedley, here, to look after their interests. It was found that 228,000 barrels of rosin were called for by the holders (or warrants). Smedley thought 50,000 barrels would satisfy the bondholders. But Vance said it would require thirty trips of the little Advance to put 20,000 barrels at Bermuda. He said that after the war ended he could deliver the 228,000 at a cost of not over \$225,000. Vance told White all these things in a letter August 25th. He had told White verbally to give 100 per cent. advance on the bonds if they could be bought for cash.

August 26th \$120,000 was paid George S. Parker for salt at Saltville, Va., for 20,000 bushels.

Brigadier General L. S. Baker notified the governor of a federal plan to capture all the coast counties. He wanted all the militia of the state called out and sent to him at Goldsboro.

August 27th Vance wrote General Lee regarding desertion from the army, saying he had put the militia in the field for sixty days to clean the state of deserters. Let General Lee state he did not know the latter disapproved of further clemency to deserters.

August 29th General Lee wrote that he expected an attack on Wilmington (after the capture of Mobile) and asked the governor to add to the force of defenders.

September 3rd Private Secretary A. M. McPheters notified Stewart, Buchanan & Co., this state's agents at Saltville, Va., that the state had 10,000 pounds sterling exchange which it would sell for \$4.50 to the pound in specie.

September 5th General Beauregard was notified that most of the home guard were in the field hunting deserters and could be readily concentrated at any point desired. General Lee was notified that any aid which the militia could give Wilmington would be given. He added: "Allow me to make a few suggestions touching the defence of that important seaport. There are two regiments, the Thirty-sixth and Fortieth, and Young's battalion, in all about 2,600 effective men. They are well drilled and disciplined, but have never been under fire and recent events at Mobile seem to demonstrate their inefficiency to hold their own under the fierce cannonade of the enemy's fleet. I would respectfully suggest the policy of sending them to the field and supplying their places with other troops. A less number of trained men I feel assured, would be far more efficient, though I do not wish the garrison lessened, of course, as a real attack is made upon Wilmington, I

earnestly urge that General Beauregard should be sent there and this not only because of the great confidence felt in him, but also because of the very little repose in General Whiting. Since the affair at Petersburg the good opinions formed of that officer by the apparent skill in the construction of the works around Wilmington has been dissipated to a painful extent."

September 8th Vance asked Governor Brown of Georgia: "Is there any possible chance to move 2,000 bales of cotton belonging to this state on your Southwestern road towards Augusta?"

September 12th is the date of the following letter to Attorney General Sion H. Rogers: "I enclose you the proceedings in the case of J. R. Thompson, S. Cobb, F. Hogwood, J. W. Oliver, J. Patrick, H. Basnight and S. Barker, prisoners captured at Plymouth; charged with treason and treasonable transactions with the enemy. The secretary of war requests me to have them indicted for treason."

September 12th Vance sent two car loads of vegetables to the North Carolina troops near Petersburg.

September 24th General Whiting called on Vance for troops. He said at no time was the force so needed to defend Wilmington. A large force was needed. "If the enemy cuts off the forts no gallantry can save them." He said he was informed on good authority that there were 10,000 men in North Carolina between the military ages, not in service. "Will not these come forward?" said he. "Let them come out for three months until the winter releases some of the veterans."

September 26th, Whiting asked Lee for "the scarcity of the military age." He replied that Whiting "must rely for reinforcements upon the reserve forces of the state and the increase in your rank and file from the conscripts."

September 23rd Vance wrote all the governors of the states this side of the Mississippi, suggesting the propriety of their meeting at Augusta, soon to unite in such general recommendations to the legislatures as they thought best. The letter to Governor Caruthers, of Tennessee, was sent to Governor Brown, of Georgia, who wrote: "I don't know where to send it, so send it to General Marcus J. Wright, of Tennessee, who commands the post at Macon, and ask him to forward it. It is probably not known to you that General Caruthers has never been inaugurated and that Governor Isham G. Harris is still the governor of Tennessee. General Wright is his brother-in-law."

October 13th, Jasper W. Davis, clerk and master for Stokes county while on a visit to Richmond was seized and put in the Tombs. Vance demanded and got his release.

General Whiting said that the ill-advised course of the government in sending the gunboat Tallahassee to sea from Wilmington had cost the confederates ten vessels, besides the loss of your noble Advance."

[Note. This concludes the extracts from the Vance letter books. There are two volumes of them. They are copies, the originals being in the war department at Washington. The copies are admirably written, by war department clerks, one clerk writing each book. There are in all over 1,000 letters and telegrams. The conclusion of 1864-5 was given in a letter dated June 22nd, before the decision was made to go through both volumes. The end is abrupt, the last letter bearing date of March, 1865, and being to the secretary of war asking for the subject matter of certain secret communications made by President Davis to congress. It is to be observed that a great many references are made to blockade running operations and to the sales of rosin and cotton bonds, or rather warrants in England. No statement is given of the amount. What was the balance of the state's credit in England? Many people have asked that question. It was said once over \$100,000.]

In the letter book of W. W. Holden, provisional governor of North Carolina under date of June 20, 1865, appears the following:

Old Capital Prison, Washington, D. C. June 30, 1865.
Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War:
Sir: I have the honor to transmit to you the enclosed communication from Governor Z. B. Vance to Governor W. W. Holden, thinking it necessary that it should pass through your hands.

Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
N. T. COLBY,
Lt. Col. Commanding.

War Department June 21, 1865.
Respectfully reported to the commanding general, department of North Carolina. The enclosed letter may be delivered to its address.

JAS. A. HARDIE,
Inspector General, U. S. A.
Old Capital Prison, Washington, June 18, 1865.
His Excellency, W. W. Holden, Raleigh, N. C.

Sir: Seeing that you are making disposition of the state property for the purpose of meeting the interest on the public debt, I deem it my duty to inform you that there is a considerable sum to the credit of the state in England, an approximate estimate of the amount can be obtained from Major John Devereux or the precise amount, I presume, from Mr. John White, if he has returned from Europe. If this money has been so deposited by my agents as to require the use of my signature in order to draw it, I am ready at any time to give it when legally authorized to do so. Of this I presume Mr. White can also inform you. There is also a small lot of furniture belonging to the executive mansion, now in possession of Mrs. Vance at Statesville, which I ordered to be returned as soon as a successor to myself had been appointed. I cannot hear from home, but hope the order has been complied with. I am, sir, Yours very respectfully,
Z. B. VANCE.

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Jacksonville Times: Miss Jane Bell, of this place, died last Sunday morning, after an illness of twenty years. Deceased was 58 years of age.

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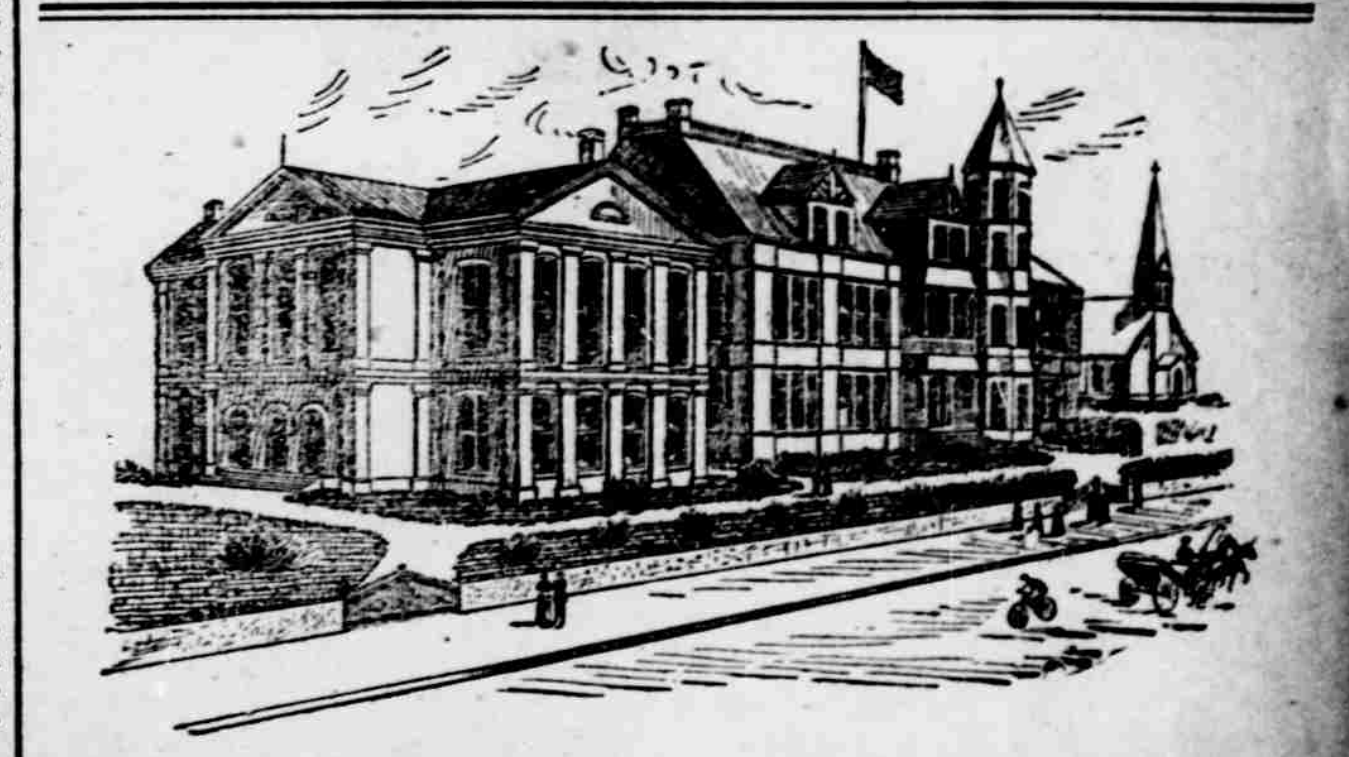
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